Islaam - The Moderate Way

Moderation, frugality and mediocrity are healthy principles in a man's life. Moderation adds to one's quality of life as well as vigour and vitality. Total and complete individual is produced, also social discipline is achieved by moderation. It actually forms the basis of a life wherein lies the individual's security, stability and consequent progress. Moderation suffices as one's provision through the journey of life whereby solace is discovered from the deluge of life's problems and complications. On the contrary haste, fret, exuberance etc. which all leads to immoderation are indeed fatal ailments. Whichever individual, group or nation are afflicted by these will deviate from the straight path and accrue itself the tools of destruction. This not only affects life's vitality but also restrict it's duration in terms of achievement and progress.

Immoderation is sometimes a trait of the mind, sometimes it find expression in one's thought patterns, at times in actions, whilst at times in approaches and methods, even in inclinations. It even surfaces in religious and philosophical spheres as well as in social and political realms. It influences one's happiness and duties. Most of all, it affects one's faith, creed, likes, dislikes and emotional tendencies. In the above domains it will always have negative affects. Like a termite it consumes a person from within, weakening him until it finally leads to ones destruction. In proportion to its intensity it will be harmful and injurious to one.

What is Moderation ?

Although moderation has fairly popular and trusted principles, numerous misunderstanding exist with regard to it. Therefore, it will be necessary to outline what is actually implicated by the term. Ordinarily what is found in-between two extremes will be termed as moderate, by this definition the condition between Imaam and kufr, normally called Nifaaq (hypocrisy), should

similarly be considered a moderate way! On the contrary, adopting firm beliefs and being particular about doing good deeds will not only be considered to be moderate and frugal but is the very basis of salvation. Moderation refers to the fixation of a just balance between two opposing and contrasting alternates in such a way that one side is not overwhelmingly influenced and neither the other totally ignored. Justice is the key operative word here, meaning that what due is to be given to any of the alternative sides is rightly accorded. Each of the two-opposing parties must be dealt with justly. In brief, a blend of justice and sound balancing is what constitutes moderation. This is a distinction of the Islaamic code of conduct which should be found in every Muslim's life.

Immoderation in the Previous Ummah's

A study concerning the causes of deviations and destructions of the bygone tribes and nations will disclose the salient features of immoderation. Consequently, the Qur'aan and Hadith has been referenced to the reality that one of the factors leading to the downfall of the Jews and Christians was their straying off the course of moderation into the labyrinth of extremes. The Qur'aan hold the following reference to the standard-bearing nations at the previous Divine Books:

"If they had established the (injunctions of the) Torah and Injeel as well as (those of) the other guidance's which are revealed to them from their Rabb, then an abundance sustenance would be bestowed upon them from the skies and land. Some of them are rightly guided (Ummat Muqtasida) while others, indulge in evil acts."

[Al-Maaida B V66]

Referring to the term Ummat Muqtasida in the above Ayat Allama Shabier Ahmed Uthmani (Radhiallahu anhu) comments: "these are those few people who, by their fortunate intuitions, chose to

follow the path of moderation and balance." [1]

Majority of the Ahle Kitaab (Jews and Christians) fell prey to imbalance, swaying towards extremities which sealed their fate of destruction. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had said:

Verily extremities in religion had destroyed those prior to you (i.e. Ahle Kitaab). [2]

A perusal through the history of Ahle Kitaab will reveal the Jews disgraced and derided their Ambiyaa. They even went as far as murdering these venerable sages. The Christians, on the contrary went to the extreme of exalting their Nabi (S. A. W) to the rank of Allaah.

The Jews exercised such asterism that they declared Haraam such things, which Allaah had made Halaal, while Christians were licentious enough to allow the commission of such acts which were totally prohibited by Allaah Ta'aala in the Torah. Their leaders (popes and priests) even made the preposterous declaration that everything is pure and permissible for pure people. This was in spite of the fact that the Injeel had emphatically stated that Hadhrat Isa (Alayhis Salaam) had not come to vanquish the sanctity of the Torah and Mosaic law but to complete it. The Jews resorted to excesses in material matters whereas the Christians exceeded the limits in spiritual maters. The result was that both groups deviated from the path of moderation and Siraat Mustaqeen. Advising them to refrain from extremism Allaah Ta'aala says in the Qur'aan:

"Declare (Oh Muhammad (S.A.W) Oh People of the Book do not practice undue excesses in your creed and do not be subservient to the base desires of those who have gone astray before you and who had led others astray as they themselves deviated from

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1 Footnote of Qur=aanic translation by Mahmood Hasan (Radiahallahu Anhu)

2 Musnad Ahmed V1 page 215 and Ibn Mja Chapter of Manaasik under Bad Qdre

the correct path."

[Al-Maaida - V77]

For this reason Nabi (S.A.W) had prohibited his Ummat from apeing this immoderate behaviour displayed by those bygone folk. With special emphasis Nabi (S.A.W) stated:

"Do not be extreme with regards to myself as the Christians were with regards to Isa (Alayhis Salaam)." [3]

Moderation as the Foundational Practice of Islaamic Sharia

After viewing the situation of the past nation, one will appreciate the Islaamic code of moderation, which shines forth. This Deen has actually been termed Siraat Murstaqeem. The Qur'aan declares:

"Most assuredly this is my straight path so tread upon it and do not pursue other ways since they would deviate you. Allaah Ta'aala instructs you to these actions so that you may obtain piety."

[Al-Anaam V152]

Siraat Mustaqeem and moderation means the same thing. It may be understood as follows: that if two points are placed apart and numerous straight lines are drawn linking the two, then the entire line may be termed Mustaqeem i.e. straight. Therefore following the Siraat Mustaqeem will be called moderation and sound temperance. The Ummah bearing the Sharia of Islaam is called the moderate Ummah as the Qur'aan says:

"Similarly we have made you a moderate Ummah so that you may witness upon others and that the Rasulullaah (S.A.W) may remain witness upon you (on the Dayat Qiyama)"

[Al-Baqara V143]

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[3] Bukhari : Chapter of Ambiyaa - Baab Wathker Fil Kitaab Maryam

The term "Ummah Wasatu" has been explained by Mufassireen to mean a moderate nation.[4] This Ummah has not only been termed a moderate Ummah but has been accorded the position of being witness upon the previous Ummah! Therefore, only being moderate is not sufficient but instructing others also upon the line of moderation is also necessary. It is incumbent to remain likewise whilst with keeping others upon the same.

When viewing the Sharia of Muhammad (S.A.W) in relation to that of the Ahle Kitaab it would be noted that while the harshness and rigidity of the Mosaic Sharia and the extreme leniency of the Christian religion appeared to present an obstacle to the temperamental genesis of mankind at large (precluding the genesis of others at that time), the Sharia of Muhammad (S.A.W) was required to persue at moderation which is the disposition of this religion. Moderation has become the integral quality and standard of Islaam, so much so that Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) has said:

"Good manners and conduct together with moderate behaviour constitute one of the twenty-five parts of prophethood."[5]

It should be noted that due to lack of moderation a person is deprived of the blessing, of a twenty-fifth portion of nabuwwa (prophethood). Islaam nurtures a person towards moderation as it accommodates this principle in all its injunctions, guidance, codes of belief and actions. Allama Abu Ishaq Shaatib (Radhiallahu anhu) (passed away 790A.H.) had written the following regarding the wisdom of moderation in the Islaamic Sharia:

"In accordance with it's natural requirement, Islaamic Sharia treads the path of moderation. Taking into consideration both

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4 Al-Kashaaf on Haqaiqi Ghawaidit Tanzeel, Tafseer Ibn Katheer

5 Abu Dawood - Chapter of Etiquette, Section on dignified behaviour (waqar)

perspectives of any situation it justly passes such injunctions which any person may faultlessly carry out without any difficulty. In fact, there are so well balanced that it demands moderation from every person bound by Sharia. Examples of these are Salaat, Fasting, Haj, Zakaat, etc. Even though it may seem that the injunctions of Sharia were ordained due to the inherent deviant and rebellious guidelines in man and due to the danger of him deviating from the path of moderation, but the entire code of regulation is to bring him on the road of moderation. This is so in spite of the fact that it is entered in a mode which appears to be inclined towards one direction.

The similitude is like that of a sympathetic doctor's treatment of a patient. According to the patients condition, his habits and the severity of the illness, suitable beneficial moderation and diets are prescribed. Finally when the patients condition has stabilised such diets are then recommended which are suitable for all conditions."[6]

The question may arise that if Islaam's disposition is one of moderation, then why do we see evidence of extremism in certain cases e.g. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

"I desire to instruct someone to read the Salaat in my place and myself to go out and set fire to all those people's homes who perform their Salaat at home instead of joining the Jamaat."[7]

Another example is the Hadith in which Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) stated:

"Whoever does not ascribe partners to Allaah will enter Junnah even though he may commit adultery or steal."[8]

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6 Al-Muafaaqaat Vol2 page 163 - Published by Al-Maktab-at-Tijaariya Al Kabra, Egypt

7 Muslim: Section masaajid under the chapter of the virtues of Salaat with Jamaat.

8 Bukhari - Chapter on Burial

Similarly many laws of the Sharia may be found wherein some extremity appear to surface which do not seem to conform to the general moderate disposition of Islaam.

In this regard one basic principle should be make known. It is that each of these exceptional situation have their own specific backgrounds wherein is concealed the validity of these either harsh or lenient words or actions.

Another basic principle is that towards which Allama Shaatbi (Radhiallahu anhu) has alluded when he writes:

"If you ponder about the principles of Sharia you will find that they exemplify moderation. If you do find in them any sway towards extreme then understand that this standpoint is actually in opposition to an either existing or anticipated opposing extreme. Consequently, a stern and harsh attitude is normally adopted for cautioning and warning. It will , however, be exercised upon these people who are religiously corrupt or lazy. Leniency on the other hand is usually used for encouragement and to avert despondency. This will be utilized on these people who are given to extreme rigidity and nit-picking." [9]

The bottom line is that the human being has numerous responsibilities and pressing needs demanding his attention. These include his personal needs of body and soul, the demands of Deen and Dunya coupled with those of worship and relaxation. Then there are the requirements of social set-ups and kinship as well as the rights of others, which need to be fulfilled. To maintain all of these in moderation and with balance, the Sharia has prescribed certain rules and regulations which are in perfect conformity with man's natural disposition.

In keeping with the balance Sharia, adopt leniency when required.

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[9] Al munafaqaat Vol 2 page 167

And excellent example of this is the exemption given to the traveller and incapable ones with regards to the fasting during Ramadhaan.

Moderation in One's Object of Life

The occurrences of an imbalance in the moderation of a person's life are innumerable. However, the foremost stage is the lack of moderation in man's life concerning his beliefs and perceptions. What is man? Why was the universe created? Who created all of it? What relationship has man towards Allaah and the creation? Is man at liberty to do as he pleases or is he in someone's bondage? In solving this myriad of questions, the moderation employed by man fills many a grief-stricken chapter of human history. Consequently, it transpired that certain groups stooped to such a degraded position that they not only worshipped things like trees, plants, animals, snakes and scorpions, but bowed to even more despicable objects like excrement and urine. On the other hand some people adopted the proud liberal and eye-centred attitude of rejecting a deity and placed themselves upon the pedestal of divinity. They also subjected others to worship them, employing duress and force to achieve this end.

Islaam put an end to all this and made the fact explicit that man is neither the slave nor subject of everyone or the object of worship and deity of anyone. He is simply the slave of Allaah only. While everybody in the world is subservient and subject to His commands. In other words, the world is for man and man is for Allaah. Allaah says in the Qur'aan:

“And from amongst the signs of Allaah is the night, the day, the sun and the moon. So do not prostrate to the sun, neither the moon, but worship Allaah who has created all of these in indeed you seek to worship Him only.”

If man will ponder over the reality of ones existence, one will see that he was created by the gradual process from clay, then a drop

of semen, to a clot of blood followed by a lump of flesh.

Thereafter Allaah bestowed him with honour and status together with a will and determination. If man will consider both these facets of ones reality, one can become haughty and proud, neither will one be dishonoured and disgraced. One would conversely attain to the pinnacle of moderation. Allaah Ta'aala asks in the Qur'aan:

“Oh man what has beguiled you with regards to your Rabb who had created you and then protected you, in the fashion of His choice moulded you? No, this can never be! But you deny even the final day!”

Moderation in Ones Financial Life

The effects of moderation are clearly visible in the economical and financial spheres of one’s life. In one’s way of life and utilisation of resources, one commits numerous excesses and deficiencies. Some people take wealth and prosperity to be only the calumniator of worldly splendour and unrestrained desires. This is the be-all and end-all of their existence, so it appears like they worship this wealth and riches. On the contrary, others have discarded the world to such an extent and made this asceticism the object of life, succumbing to lives as monks. The Qur'aan has refuted both extreme.

“ Attractive to man has been made the things they covet, women and sons, heaped up hoards of gold and silver, branded houses (for blood and excellence, (a wealth) of cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world's life. But in nearness to Allaah is the best of goals (to return to).”

In the verse the reality of wealth, riches and worldly commodities has been outlined. They have no authoritative powers and any inclination towards them is described as harmful. Materialism has been condemned.

On the other hand, Islaam has also sounded a warning against the institution of monasticism where people have totally rejected a solid and straight life of isolation discarding all worldly things. This attitude also requires correction. Says Allaah Ta'aala:

"But the monasticism which they invented for themselves, we did not prescribe for them (we commanded) only the seeking for the Pleasures of Allaah, but that they did not foster as they souls have done."

In this Ayat although extreme, asceticism is for Allaah and on His name, but is discouraged in Islaam. Islaam never taught monasticism, nor did it ever foster materialism. It, however, showed the moderate path between these two extremes. Not better formula could ever be sought for man's development and progress. Islaam has struck the perfect balance between materialism and spiritualism. Qaaroon who was enamoured by his wealth and riches, was addressed thus:

"Seek with the (wealth) which Allaah has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter and forget not your portion in the world.

Both worlds are thus for man. For this reason Allaah has taught his bondsman the following supplication:

"Oh our Rabb, grant us the good of this world as well as the good of the next world and save us from the punishment of the Fire of Jahannam."

This dua Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) used to make serves as a commentary to this Qur'aanic dua. He would say:[10]

[10] Muslim, chapter of Zikr, Section on Duas

"Oh Allaah, amend the matters of my religious life in which lies the security of my affairs. Amend the matters of my worldly life which holds my economic well being. Amend also my Aakhirat towards which I will return."

A person's religion is only attained by traversing the road of this world. Total neglect of one's worldly affairs would lead to spiritual losses likewise a deep attachment to the world would result in the loss of one's Deen.

Hadhrat Amr bin Aas (Radhiallahu anhu) narrated that once Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) called for me with the instruction that I present myself with my clothing and weapons. Accordingly, I responded and reached the presence of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) while he was performing Wudhu. He lifted his gaze upon me momentarily, then dropped it saying, "Oh Amr, I wish to dispatch you in command of an army so that Allaah may bestow you with some wealth of booty. I hope that you may acquire much wealth". I replied "But I have not accepted Islaam due to any hopes of acquiring wealth. I became a Muslim due to my desire for Islaam so that I may be honoured with the companionship of Allaah's Rasool (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied:

"Good lawful wealth is a good thing for a good, pious man. [11]"

Allaah Ta'aala has placed a blend of spirituality and materialistic instincts in man. We have no option but to adopt a way of moderation between the two.

Moderation in Matters of Lawful and Unlawful

When an imbalance exists in a person between ones materialistic and spiritual selves, one becomes inclined towards making the

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[11] **Al-Adabal-mufried page 84 Cairo Print 1375**

lawful (Halaal) as unlawful (Haraam) and vice verse. He gets involved in excesses and deletions in the very framework of Halaal and Haraam. In this regard also Islaam has shown the way to moderation. Islaam teaches us that not everything in the world is beneficial and lawful for man, neither is everything harmful and unlawful. However, there are many such things which are beneficial and Halaal whereas some are injurious and haraam. Therefore, the things ordained to be Halaal by Allaah Ta'aala cannot be made Haraam, neither can the forbidden things be declared legal. Man does not vest the authority to declare things Halaal or Haraam for this right is reserved solely for Allaah.

The Qur'aan says:
"But say not for any false thing that your tongues may put forth. "This is lawful and this is forbidden", so as to ascribe false things to Allaah."

For this reason Allaah instructs us:

"O ye who believe make not unlawful the good things, which Allaah has made lawful for you. But, sometime no excess for Allaah loves not those given to excess."

"Oh children of Adam! Wear your bountiful apparel at every time and place of prayer. Eat and drink but waste not by excess for Allaah loves not the wasters. Say (Oh Muhammad (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) who has forbidden the bountiful (gifts) of Allaah which He has produced for His servants. And the things, clean and pure, (which he has provided) for sustenance? They are, in the life of this world for those who believe (and) purely for them on the Day of Judgement.

Allaah not only focuses the right of prohibition to the ordinary laymen, but even the Prophets reserve no right to declare any lawful thing as forbidden in their personol capacity. Allaah Ta'aala

addresses Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) in the Qur'aan saying:

“Oh Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) why do you make unlawful that which Allaah has made lawful for you?”

In the same strain Islaam also does not permit the legalising of prohibited things. Allaah Ta'aala says:

“Oh ye who believe! Violate not the sanctity of the symbols of Allaah, nor of the sacred month, nor of animals, brought for sacrifice, nor the garlands that mark out such animals, nor the people reverting to the Sacred House seeking of the bounty and good pleasure of their Rabb.”

Moulana Hameelud Deen Farachi has written in the commentary of the afore-mentioned verse of Surah Tahreem, "Making something Halaal to be Haraam it just as great as a crime as making a Haraam thing Halal, since both constitute misguidance and transgression. The only difference is that the legalising of the forbidden act is Fisq (impiety) which stems from base desires and rebellion, while the forbidden of a lawful act constitutes monotheism which finds it's source in ignorance and foolishness.[12]”

The Balance between Niggardliness and Extravagance.

The subject of spending as well, excessive behaviour has been exposed. Sometimes such extravagance and wastefulness is adopted that it even put Shaitaan to shame. On the other hand, miserliness is also practised to such a degree that people seem to

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12 Tafseer Nizaamal Qur=aan page 165 urdu Translation. Amin Ahram Islaahi, Saraai Mir Azamgar 1990.

be the offspring of Qaaroon. Islaam classified both ways to be immoderate. In prohibiting wastefulness Allaah Ta'aala says:

“And give their dues to relatives, destitute and travellers and be not wasteful for verily the wasteful ones are the brothers of the Devils. And the devil was ungrateful towards His Rabb”

Furthermore Allaah Says:

“Do not be wasteful for verily Allaah likes not the wasteful.”

Conversely, Allaah Ta'aala also condemn niggardliness and parsimony.

“Those whom Allaah has bestowed with his grace (financially) should never think that their miserliness with these things is good for them. It is evil for them. They will be yoked with the things they squander on the Day of Judgement.”

After all this Allaah Ta'aala show us the moderate and balanced way saying:

“Make not your hand tied (like a niggard's) to your neck nor stretch it forth to it's utmost reach so that thou become blameworthy and destitute. Verily your Rabb does provide sustenance in abundance for who He pleases, and He provides a just measure for He does know and cares for all His Servants.”

In this Ayat tying of the hand refers to miserliness and stinginess and stretching forth of the hand refers to extravagance. A person should posses that measure of moderation that he does not become so niggardly as to stem the circulation of wealth, neither so extravagance as to destroy his financial strength. On the contrary, he should have the balanced perception neither to altogether stop spending nor to succumb to the evils of overspending.

Allaah Ta'aala regards a perfect Mu'min to be one who bases his financial life upon moderation and frugality. Allaah praised him thus in the Qur'aan:

“An those who, when they spend, are neither prodigal nor grudging (miserly); and there is ever a firm station between he two.” [Al-Furqaan 67]

(Regarding these people, a later Ayat confirms "these people will be awarded a high place for as much as they were steadfast, and they will be met therein with welcome and the word of peace. Abiding therein forever. Happy is it as abode and station).
[Al-Furqaan 75/76]

Sadaqah is an important act of worship. By this a person not only purifies his wealth and soul, but averts Allaah displeasure. Fardh Sadaqah (Zakaat) is merely 2¼ % where as optional Sadaqah is as much as a person can mange. Just as it is not permissible for a person to coil around his wealth as a snake and hoard it, so too he is not permitted to dish out everything. One should not give all in charity, rendering himself destitute and dependent. This he cannot term Tawakkul (Trust in Allaah) especially when it constitutes violating the rights of his dependants (like one's wife and children). In this regard it transpired that when Hadhrat Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqaas(Radhiallahu anhu) fell ill, he was visited by Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). Since his only heir was his daughter, he intended to give all his wealth in charity. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) prevent him from doing this and allowed him to bequeath in charity only one-third of his wealth. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) advised him thus.

"One hand is more than enough. For you to leave your heirs wealthy is better than leaving them destitute, having to stretch

their arms out before people."[13]

Hadhrat Ka'ab bin Maalik (Radhiallahu anhu) stayed behind upon the occasion of the Taboock expedition due to which he incurred the displeasure of Allaah and his Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). He made incessant Tauba (repentance) and upon it's acceptance he came to Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) with the following request:

"I wish to give all my wealth in charity for the Pleasure of Allaah and His Rasool (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) on account of my Taube being accepted."

Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied:

“It is better for you to keep some wealth with you.[14] It has been thus established that one should safeguard against both harms of miserliness and extravagance, maintaining a balance between extreme providence and destitution.”

Moderation in the Social Sphere

The affects of an imbalance in social moderation has been displayed on numerous occasions. Take the example of fulfilling the rights of people. Allaah Ta'aala has entrusted to man the joint responsibility of his parents as well as his wife and children. an Hadith is narrated from Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Umar (Radhiallahu anhu) (Radhiallahu anhu)

“Just as your father has a right over you, so too does your child have a right upon you.”

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13 Abu Dawood Book of Wasaayaa. Chapter concerning the permissible amount a person may bequeath.

14 Bukhari: Book of Maghazi: Story of Ka=ab bin Maalik (Radiahallahu Anhu)

Sometimes a man pays so much attention to his parents that he is negligent towards his wife and children. On the contrary, others may be so enamoured with their wife and children that they turn a blind eye to the difficulties and grievances of their parents. The current approach would be to remain cognisant of each party's rights and fulfil them accordingly. The Qur'aan explains.

“your parents or your children: Ye know not which of them is nearer to you in usefulness.”
[An-Nissaa B 11]

Allaah also teaches us what dua a person should make with regards to his children.

“Oh our Rabb grant us from our wives and children the coolness of our eyes and make us leaders to the righteous ones.”
[Al-Fuqaan B 74]

Regarding the parents Allaah instructs us thus:

“And (Allaah has decreed that you show) kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain old age with you, say not "Fie" unto them nor repulse them, but speak unto them a gracious word. And lower unto them the wing of submission through mercy and say: "My Rabb, Have mercy on them both as they did care for me when I was little.”

Moderation in Individual and Collective Affairs

Gross imbalance immoderation occurs in affairs of individual and collective natures. In society many people are such who are concerned only with themselves and their respective occupations.

They have no concern about the plight of others. Neither do they perceive the difficulties of others not do they concern themselves with the reformation and rehabilitation of social ills and vices. This attitude is not only immoderate but detrimental to society. Allaah Ta'aala warn such people:

“And guard yourselves against a chastisement which does not fall exclusively on those of you who are wrong-doers.”
[Surah Anfaal B 25]

On the other hand certain people are such who delve so much into the affairs of others that it becomes interference. They are so involved and concerned with the reformation of others that they do not bother about themselves. Sometimes they become divine military commanders and exceed all bounds. This type of behaviour is not conducive to a healthy and peaceful environment. The Qur'aan advises such people as follows:

“He who errs cannot injure you if you are rightly guided.”
[Al-Maa'ida - 105]

The gist of these teachings is that a person should not be so self-centred and focuses only towards himself or herself that they are then only concerned with their welfare. Neither should they become so engrossed with the affairs of others that they neglect themselves. They should rather adopt a moderate way of fulfilling both personal and social needs so as to achieve true bliss and generate the same for others.

Moderation in Love and Hatred

Man is exceedingly prone to fall prey to immoderation with regards to love and hatred, friendship and enmity. When a person is infatuated with another then he supports him in all matters whether permissible or not. The beloved's faults also appear to be

virtues. Conversely when a person dislikes another then he will oppose him in the matters of truth and virtues will appear to be vices. The proverb is famous that in love vice becomes virtue while in enmity virtue becomes vice. (The Hadith is all well known).

“Ones love for a thing blinds and deafens.”

In immoderation a person drifts away from the truth. Therefore it is imperative that a person approaches these matters with a calm sobriety. Usually a person's disposition at times of infatuation and hatred is an abnormal one should a person loose his soundness at this juncture it would result in very great harm because one will sway towards excess or deficiencies. Hadhrat Ali (Radiahallahu Anhu) stated very beautifully:[15]

“Love your beloved moderately perchance he may become an enemy one day. Harbour enmity towards your enemy also in moderation perchance he should become a friend one day.”

In this regard Hadhrat Umar and Farooq (Radhiallahu anhu) also mentioned an exceptionally wise statement:

“Your love should not be bitter and lamenting neither your enmity destructive.”

Someone then asked him that how is this possible? Hadhrat Umar (Radhiallahu anhu) replied that this is when you love a person it is like the love of a child, that you want to break everything for his sake. And when you dislike a person you wish to destroy and annihilate him.[16]

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15 Tirmidi: Back of Birr and Sila Chapter on moderation with regards to love and hatred.

16 Al-Adabul Mufried page 237

Even the Qur'aan Kareem guides the Muslims in this regard to adhere strictly to a moderate approach. Allaah says:

“And let not your hatred of any people seduce you that you deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to piety.”
[Al-Ma'aida - 8]

Moderation in Anger

Anger is usually prompted when another person becomes an obstacle to the accomplishment of any of our tasks or objectives. Also when one's hopes and plans receive a knock. This results in the person's temporary mental instability due to which he adopts an angry approach to the matter. The degree of anger is proportional to the mental instability. The state of anger generally affects a person's sobriety following which most acts of immoderation occur in this state due to which regret is felt later on. For this reason Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) forbade the passing of judgement in the state of anger since there exists a strong possibility of injustice and irrationality. He mentioned:

“No person should pass judgement between two others while he is angry.[17]”

Moderation requires a person to control his anger and not allow his emotions to gain the upper hand over his sobriety and intelligence. Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Mas'ood (Radhiallahu anhu) once enquired from the Sahabah as to whom was considered a try hero? They replied that he was one whom no one defeats. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said, "No, a true hero is he who manages to control himself when angry."[18]

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17 Muslim: Book of Judgements Ba=ab Karahati Qadial Qaadi Wa Hu Wa Ghadbaan

18 Muslim: Book of Judgements Ba=ab Fardl yumsiku natsahu Ghadab

Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) also showed us the method of controlling one's anger. When a standing person is angered, he should sit and if his anger is still not subdued he should lie down.[19]

In another narration it is maintained that when one becomes angry he should make Wudhu since anger is from Shaitaan who is created from fire. Consequently water extinguished fire.[20]

This was with regard to becoming angry in general life situations. A person is allowed, however to express anger when the enforcement of Allaah's laws are concerned and abstinence from His prohibitions. It is impossible that any of Allaah's laws be contravened in front of a Mu'min and his Religious allegiance is not incited. He will most surely become angry but even now he should adopt a sober attitude which will not affect the implementation of Allaah's prescribed injunctions.

Moderation in Joy and Sorrow

Happiness and grief are two natural instincts in the human, which are directly connected to his emotions and feelings. The cause of joy is the appearance of something beloved while that of sorrow is the disappearance of the same. Upon the occasions of joy and sorrow people usually do not remain within the constraints of moderation. Examples of joyous occasions are when a person acquires his life-long partner, viz. marriage and when a child is born to him. Upon these occasions people are prone to indulge in fun and play, sing and dance, and all unnecessary forms of extravagance. They display their happiness by enacting all types of absurd and frivolous customs whereas this is really an occasion to show gratitude to Allaah. Gratitude to Allaah's expressed by

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19 Musnad Ahmed Vol 5 page 142

20 Musnad Ahmed Vol 4 page 333 Also Muslim Kitabuz Zuhud

being obedient to His commands.

An occasion of much grief presents itself when a beloved one passes away. Upon this occasion people express grief by excessive mourning, lamentation and wailing. It was a custom amongst the Arabs that they would not only cry themselves, but they would call outside people to cry with them. Islaam recognises sorrow to be natural emotion and has preserved its necessary expression. However Islaam has restricted the traditional way of excessively crying and inviting others to cry. In this moderation is encouraged. Consequently Umm Attiya (Radhiallahu anha) narrates that when Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) would take the pledge of allegiance from whom he would instruct them not to wail over the deceased.[21]

Islaam has prescribed patience instead. Hadhrat Sahaib bin Sanaan (Radhiallahu anhu) narrates that Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) states: "How unique are the matters of a Mu'min. Everything augurs well for him and this is exclusive to him. If anything pleasant occurs he is grateful and this is good for him. If anything unpleasant occurs he exercises patience and this is also good for him." (Since in both cases he will be rewarded). [22]

To show gratitude (Shukr) at times of joy and to be patient at times of distress is the prescription to perfect moderation in the human's life.

Moderation in Dress

In Islaam a person's temperament, character, indications and personality are reflected in his clothing. Therefore, moderation should also be adopted in dressing. Clothing is both a necessity as well as a form of adornment and beautification. It is, therefore,

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[21] Nukhari. Kitaabal Janaaiz. Baabun Nahy minan nauh

[22] Musnad Ahmed Vol 4 page 333. Also Muslim - Kitaab - Zuhud

imperative that one adopts a balanced stance between these two aspects. Just as it is inappropriate that a person clad himself in such attire which is superior to his social standing, so too will it be if he disgraces himself by wearing such clothing which is worn-out, tattered and unkempt. Wearing crisp and clean clothing is suitable even for the most humble. The wearing of silk and such clothes, which hang below the ankles, has been declared immoderate for men in Islaam. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) has said:

"The man who wears silk in this world will not wear it in the hereafter.[23]"

Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) has also mentioned:

"The man who drags his clothing (below the angles) out of pride. Allaah will not even look at him (with mercy) on the day of Qiyaamah.[24]"

Similarly, boisterous and pompous attire also discloses a person's immoderation. Rasulullaah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had mentioned:

"Whoever adorn clothing of pomp and show in this world will be made to wear clothing of disgrace by Allaah Ta'aala on the Day of Qiyaamah.[25]"

However, if good clothing is worn without pride then it would not only be desires but commendable according to ones personality as Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

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23 Bukhari - Book of Clothing

24 Bukhari - Book of Clothing

25 Ibn Majah - Book of Clothing

“Whoever has an atom's weight of pride within his heart will not enter Jannah. Someone asked Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) "What about a person who likes his clothes to be good and his shoes to be good? Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) replied: "Verily, Allaah Ta'aala is beautiful and likes things of beauty."[26]”

Good clothing is commendable and serves to introduce a person. Allaah Ta'aala likes a person to make apparent His bounties as Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) has stated:

“Verily, Allaah Ta'aala likes to see the signs of his bounty upon his bondsman.[27]”

It is not inconformity with moderate behaviour to wear clothing of pride, pomp and show just as to wear clothing inferior to one’s status which fall below the standards of cleanliness and civility.

Moderation in walking and Speech

Included in the social etiquette's and principles taught by Islaam is moderation in one's conduct and speech. Walking haughtily, with un-necessary haste and speaking in raised voices are not socially acceptable. Such behaviour indicates an imbalance in a person's mental disposition. Allaah Ta'aala instructs thus:

“Be modest in thy bearing (walk) and subdue thy voice. Lo! The harshest of all voices is the voice of the ass [Lugmaan - 19]”

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[26] Muslim - Book of Clothing

[27] Tirmidhi - Chapter of Istidhaan and Adab from Rasulullah (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam)

Moderation in Politics

In the political arena much immoderation is displayed with regard to the mutual relationship between the individuals and the state as far as rights and obligations are concerned. Some states concede so much freedom to their citizens that they in turn infringe upon and usurp the rights of their follow citizens.

Another type of state employs a system using which will have its assets condense and accrue into the hands of a few intelligent people while the majority remain deprived. Eventually the majority becomes so ensnared in the trap of the few that it become impossible for them to escape. Then their freedom is so restricted that, except for the fulfilment of certain basic necessities, they have no choice in matters. All these are the responsibility of the state. As a result, man finds himself caught up in such a suppressive system, which deprives him of access to develop his potential, and capabilities. Western democratic countries which after the un-harnessed freedom and communism, gives the state, random liberties and control, both are extremes to take heed of. The western dispensations offer much freedom that they even recognise the right to homosexuality and sodomy. Communism, on the other extreme denies the individual the right to beliefs and worship while also forbidding freedom of opinion.

The result of such immoderation was that in it's very own homeland of Russia (former Soviet Union) communism became an exemplary disaster and fell into shambles. The western systems of democracy and capitalism is not awaiting it's turn to collapse.

Between these two extremes Islaam has stipulated the rights of both individual and state. On one hand it accords certain privileges to the citizen and allows him certain rights of freedom and self-determination. At the same time it also gives the state options and the right to formulate legislation to curtail the citizen's abuse of his freedom. Islaam strikes a perfect balance between the rights and obligations of both citizen and state which

orchestrates the development and progress of both together with the establishment of a healthy political system. Islaam addresses the citizen as follows (In the words of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam):

"Listen and obey even though such an Abyssinian slave be appointed as your leader whose head is like a raison.[28]"

On the other hand the following is addressed to haughty leaders:

"That servant who is given leadership over a nation and is not their well-wisher, will not even attain the fragrance of Jannah. [29]"

The Rights of Allaah and the rights of Man

Mans greatest acts of immoderation occur in respect of the right he owes both to Allaah and to his fellow man. At times a person may become so lost in fulfilling Allaah's rights that the rights of people do not even cross his mind. Whereas these are, in fact, stipulated by Allaah Himself. There fulfilment also constitutes obedience to Allaah which would attain reward and recompense. Conversely it may also occur that a person becomes so engrossed in fulfilling the rights of people that he has not time for those of Allaah. Today, many a Muslim falls prey to this form of immoderation. One will notice that those individuals involved in community services, Samaritans and people affiliated to social welfare organisations appear generally negligent towards their Salaat, fasts and other basic compulsions of Islaam. On the other hand many religious, pious and ascetic people may be found who are not only negligent towards the masses but fail to even honour the right of their very own friends and relatives; even of their own

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28 Bukhari: Book of Ahkaam - Chapter on Sama with Ta=ah

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families and children. Islaam deems this behaviour also worthy of rectification. In Islaam a moderate approach would be a balance between he fulfilment of both Allaah's rights and man's rights.

When the Sahaabah (Radhiallahu anhum) emigrated from Makkah Mukarrama to Madina Munawwara, Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) made each Muhaajir (emigrant) the brother of an Ansaari (Medinite). In accordance to the principle of brotherhood in Islaam, here was a practical demonstration at the same such a relationship was established which was a substitute to blood relations. This is what is commonly termed as Mawaakhaat. In this manner Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) made the emigrant Hadhrat Salmaan Faarsi (Radhiallahu anhu) the brother of Hadhrat Abu Darda (Radhiallahu anhu) who was an Ansaari. Regarding these two appears the following story in many authentic Hadith collections.

Once Hadhrat Salmaan Faarsi (Radhiallahu anhu) (who was a very aged person) went to meet Hadhrat Abu Darda (Radhiallahu anhu). Upon reaching the home he found the wife at Abu Darda (Radhiallahu anhu) Ummu Darda (Radhiallahu anha) in a very dishevelled condition. He asked what the problem was, to which she replied: "your brother Abu Darda (Radhiallahu anhu) has no need for this world." (I.e. his excessive religious exercises and devotions have made him indifferent towards my rights). When Hadhrat Darda (Radhiallahu anhu) returned he presented some food before Hadhrat Salmaan (Radhiallahu anhu) saying: "you eat comfortably. I cannot join you since I am fasting." Upon this Hadhrat Salmaan (Radhiallahu anhu) said: "I cannot eat until you join me." Consequently, Hadhrat Abu Darda terminated his fast and also partook of the meal. During the night Hadhrat Abu Darda (Radhiallahu anhu) prepared to stand up in Salaat for the night when Hadhrat Salmaan instructed him to sleep. He went back to sleep but after a while again aroused to begin his devotions. Again Hadhrat Salmaan (Radhiallahu anhu) told him to sleep. Again he went back to sleep. Finally when the night was dawning to its final hours; Hadhrat Salmaan (Radhiallahu anhu) said that now you may awaken. They both the got up and performed

Salaat together. Thereafter, Hadhrat Salmaan (Radhiallahu anhu) made a very wise statement, stating: "your Rabb has a right over you, so does your body and your family. So give each one their due right. The next morning Hadhrat Abu Darda (Radhiallahu anhu) went to Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and narrated the entire episode to him upon which Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) responded:

"Salmaan has indeed spoken the truth.[30]"

It is worth considering here that Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) confirmed Hadhrat Salmaan's statement. It was upon the fact that he had practically showed Hadhrat Abu Darda (Radhiallahu anhu) the way to moderation. He showed him how to strike a perfect balance between worship and normal life, between the rights of Allaah and the rights of Allaah's servants.

More elucidation may be gleaned from the following Hadith wherein Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) asked the Sahaabah (Radhiallahu anhum): Who is a bankrupt person? The Sahaabah (Radhiallahu anhum) replied. "In our terminology he would be such a person who has no wealth nor any goods with him." Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "A bankrupt person is he who would appear on the day of Qiyaamah with his fasts, Salaats and Zakaat, but in this world he would have sworn at a person, usurped someone's wealth, slandered someone, killed or hit yet another. In re-compensation each of these oppressed persons would be given from his stock of good deeds. Finally when his deeds would be exhausted then all their sins would be burdened upon him until he is eventually cast into Jahannam. [31]

From this it is learnt that if together with the fulfilment of Allaah's rights, the rights owed to man are not fulfilled, then a person will

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30 Bukhari - kitaabul Adab. Baabu San=it Ta=aam Wal Takalluf lid-Daif

31 Muslim kitaabul Bit Babu Tahreemu -Zulm

be left on the Day of Qiyaamah as one who had carried out no good at all, in spite of the vast number of good actions to his account. All his good deeds will not avail him and he will enter Johannam with those who had no good to their names. Similarly a person who only concerned himself with the fulfilment of the rights of his kith and kin and their love paying no attention to those of Allaah, then this will also not save him from Jahannam. To this effect the Qur'aan declares:

"Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your wives, and your tribe, and the wealth you have acquired, and your merchandise for which you fear that there will be no sale, and your dwellings we desire are dearer to you than Allaah and His messenger and striving in His way: then wait till Allaah bring His command (of punishment) to pass. And Allaah guides not the wrongdoing folk [Surah Taube B 24]

Moderation in Ibaadah (Acts of Worship)

Much immoderation is displayed in devotional acts of worship (Ibaadah). Even adherent and pious people are generally guilty of this. Without doubt excessive Ibaadah may acquire Allaah proximity and pleasure, but is Allaah really in need of this excessive exertion? Can we really fulfil the true rights of His worship? No and most definitely not! Therefore by transgressing the limits of moderation why should we put ourselves through difficulty and hardship? The answer to this basic questions was provided by Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) in the following Hadith narrated by both Hadhrat Abu Hurriah (Radhiallahu anhu) and Hadhrat Aisha (Radhiallahu anha):

"Be resolute and moderate and always bear in mind that your actions alone can never enter you into Jannah. And the actions most beloved to Allaah Ta'aala are those upon which he is

constant even though it be little.[32] "

The commentator on Muslim, Imaam Nawaai (Radhiallahu anhu) explains the word (Moderate) as follows:

"It refers to such moderation wherein lies no excess or any deficiency. [33]"

Regarding the explanation of the word (being Resolute) is concerned it is written:

"This word in matters refers to the seeking of a balance which is, in fact, moderation and sobriety.[34]"

Whenever Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) learnt about anyone not being moderate in their Ibaadah he would counsel them. Once Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) came to Hadhrat Aisha (Radhiallahu anha) while another woman was with her. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) enquired as to who she was?. Hadhrat Aisha (Radhiallahu anha) replied that she was such a woman whose Salaat is of great repute (In a narration of Ahmed vol. 3 page 199 it is narrated that she does not sleep on account of her excessive Salaat). Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Take it easy and carry out Ibaadah according to your capabilities for verily, Allaah can never tire but definitely you will get tired.[35]"

Hadhrat Anas bin Maalik (Rahmatullah Alayh) says that once three people visited the quarters of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam)'s wives to enquire about his acts of worship. When

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32 Bukhari: Kitaabur Riqaaq. Baabul Qasd Wal Mudaawama Alal Amal

33 Riyaadus Saaliheen Baab Fil Istiqaamah.

34 Abdul Aziz Al-Khawli. Al-Adab. An Niswi page 183. Beiruit print. 1984

35 Bukhari. Kitaabur Riqaaqw. Baabul Qasd Wal Mudaawama Alal Amal

they were duly informed about it's details they felt it to be very little and said: "How can we be compared to Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) since all his previous and future sins have been forgiven." One of them declared, "I will perform Salaat the whole night through!" The second exclaimed, "And I will continue fasting without a break between!" still the third expressed: "And I will stay away from women and never get married." When Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) received news about this he approached them and asked: 'Are you thoes who had made these statement? Understand well that I swear by the name of Allaah although I may be the one who posses the most fear of Allaah and the most religious, but I fast and break it also I perform Salaat and I sleep also, and I marry women as well. Whoever chooses to waver from my way of life cannot be counted amongst my followers." [36]

The statements of these three Sahaabah (Radhiallahu anhum) regarding the various Ibaadah were based upon immoderation whereas the Sunnah way of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) is one of moderation regarding which he said:

"Whosoever turn away from my Sunnah is not from amongst my followers."

The Hadith serves as an eye-opener to many a person who may not have perceived the true meaning of piety.

Hadhrat Jaabir bin Abdullaah (Radhiallahu anhu) narrates that once Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was going somewhere when he noticed a person performing Salaah upon a rock. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) proceeded onwards to a place in Makkah where he spent some time. Upon returning he found the person still engrossed as he was previously. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) stood there and gathered all the people around saying: "Oh people! Hole fast onto moderation! (this he repeated

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thrice) For verily Allaah can never tire but you will tire yourselves out."[37]

Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Abbaas (Radhiallahu anhu) narrates that once a person was standing while Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) was delivering a sermon. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) enquired from the people regarding the person and his remaining standing. They informed him that the person was Abu Israeel and that he has taken a vow to remain standing in the sun, never to sit not in the shade. He would remain fasting and would not speak to anyone. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Tell him to speak, sit in the shade and only complete the fast." [38] One may reflect upon the reason for prohibiting the person's silence, his remaining standing in the sun and not sitting. It was because of the unnecessary difficulty, which he was imposing upon himself.

Hadhrat Anas (Radhiallahu anhu) narrates that once Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) entered the Masjid and found a rope tied between two pillars. He asked the Sahaabah (Radhiallahu anhum) as to what the reason for it. They replied that it was for Hadhrat Zainub (Radhiallahu anhu) who would use it for support after being tired out by his excessive Salaat. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) commented:

"Unfasten it! A person should perform Salaat while he is alert and awake. When he gets exhausted he should then sleep.[39]"

Whenever Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) used to instruct the Sahaabah (Radhiallahu anhum) with any task he would do so in accordance with the person's strength and capabilities. They, however, wished that he could instruct them with something more

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[37] Ibn Majah. Baabul Mudaawamati, Alaj Amal.

[38] Bukhari - Kitaabul Aymaan wan Nadhr - Baabunnadhr Fima Laa Yamlik

[39] Bukhari - kitaabul Aymaan - Baab Ahabbud Deen Ililaahi. Adwamuhu

tasking upon which Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) would emphatically remand them. Hadhrat Aisha (Radhiallahu anha) Reports the following:

“Whenever Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) instructed the Sahaabah (Radhiallahu anhum) with any task he would instruct them with something within their capability. They would say: Oh Allaah's Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) we are not (as fortunate) as your are since Allaah has forgiven all you past and future sins.." (i.e. we require to exert more in good acts to secure salvation) upon this Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) would become angry to the extent that the anger was visible on his face, and he would say: Verily, the most Allaah-fearing and knowledgeable person is myself." (i.e. if any more exertion was required I would know about it and instruct likewise).[40]”

The life of Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam) was an epic of moderation and perfect balance which is necessary for us all to follow. Hadhrat Jaabir (Radiahallahu Anhu) narrated regarding the Salaat of Nabi (Sallallahu alayhi wasallam):

“I used to perform numerous Salaats behind Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) and his Salaat was always of moderate duration, so too were his sermons. [41]”

From the narrations, Imaam Tirmidhi (Radhiallahu anhu) has recorded in Shamaail Tirmidhi as well as from what is recorded in to other books of Hadith concerning the habits, character, life-style and mannerisms of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) it can be established that all these were exemplary models of moderation. This role model is a torch-bearer of guidance. Hadhrat Sa'aad bin Hishaam (Radhiallahu anhu) narrates that he had divorced his wife and proceeded to Madinah intending to sell

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40 Bukhari. Kitabul Aymaan. Baab Ahabbud Deen Ilillahi Adwamuhu

41 Muslim. Kitaabul Jum=a Baab For Khutbatio was Saalaato Qasdan

his property so as to purchase arms to fight in Jihaad with this in mind he met some companions of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). They informed him that six of them had also intended the same but were all restrained by Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) who said:

"You have a perfect example in the life of the Rasool of Allaah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam).[42]"

Hadhrat Aisha (Radhiallahu anha) reports that Rasulullah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) once called Hadhrat Uthmaan bin Madh'aan (Radhiallahu anhu) and told him: "Oh Uthmaan! Are you wavering away from my Sunnah? He replied: "Oh Allaah's messenger (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) I swear by Allaah that I have not turned away from your way. I follow only your Sunnah. "Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) told him, "I sleep as well as I pray, I fast as well as I eat and I do also get married. Oh Uthmaan, fear Allaah! The rights of your family as well as those of your own self. Fast at times and discard as well. Perform Salaat and sleep as well. [43]

One should ponder that in spite of Jihaad being such a great act of devotion, yet it requires moderation. In fact, the example of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) regarding Ibaadah is a model for us wherein our salvation and prosperity lies concealed. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had specifically warned his Ummah against adopting irrationality and making simple things difficult. According to a narration of Hadhrat Abu Hurriah (Radhiallahu anhu) Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said:

"Verily, Deen is simple, whoever attempts to make it difficult will be vanquished. So be moderate, balanced and rejoice. Seek help (through worship) during the mornings and evenings as well as

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42 Abu Dawood - Baab Fi Salaatil Layl

43 Abu Dawood - Baabu Maa Yumuru Bihi Minal Qasd Fis Salaar

some while during the night. [44]"

Another narration states:

"by Adopting moderation you will achieve your goals."

Hadhrat Aisha (Radhiallahu anha) narrates:

"Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) never used to stand the entire night up to the morning in Salaat, neither did he complete a Qur'aanic recitation in one night, not did he fast a complete month except during Ramadhan. Whenever he performed a Salaat he would be constant in it and whenever sleep overpowered him at night he would lie down and sleep and (make up the missed Salaat) by performing twelve rakaats during the day.[45]"

The Wisdom Behind Moderate Ibaadah

To perceive the meaning of these advices of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) a person must study the life of Hadhrat Abdullaah bin Amr Al-Aas (Radhiallahu anhu) he who renders his own account of the episode. He says: "when Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) learnt of my habit of fasting every single day and that I had undertaken to stand in Salaat the entire night through, he summoned me. He asked: "Did you take this task upon yourself?" I replied: Oh yes, Oh Rasul of Allaah (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam), may my parents be sacrificed for you! He said: "you will not be able to cope with it. Therefore you should fast at times, as well as miss fasts. Perform Salaat and sleep as well. You should fast only 3 days a month because the reward of a good action is multiplied ten times, and in this way it would be equivalent of a year's fasting." I mentioned, I can manage more

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44 Bukhari. Kitaabul Imaan - Baabud Deen Yusr.

45 Abu Dawood Baab Fi Salaatil Layl.

than that. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) added, "then fast a day and miss two" I said, I said I can manage even more than that. He said "then fast every alternative day for this was the manner adopted by Hadhrat Dawood (Radhiallahu anhu) and it is the best of fasts.' I said: but I can do more than that. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) reiterated, "there can be no better way."[46]

Hadhrat Abdullaah Bin Amr (Radhiallahu anhu) himself narrates another tradition which may serve as a supplement to the above mentioned. This is reported by Imaam Bukhaari also in his chapter concerning The Virtues of the Qur'aan. He says: "My father married me to a girl of noble lineage and would enquire from here with regards to her needs and her husband. She would say: "He is an extremely fine man. Since we have been betrothed he has never shared our bed neither has he felt my skin. " When (My father) Amr bin Al-Aasar (Radhiallahu anhu) repeatedly heard this he mentioned it to Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) who called for me. When I entered his presence, he asked. "how often do you fast?" I replied: Every day, he then asked: "How often do you complete a recitation of the entire Qur'aan?" I said, every night. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) said: "Fast ten days a month and complete a recitation once a month." I pleaded, I can manage more than that. He replied; "Fast three days a week". I said I can manage still more I am capable of. He said: "Then fast a day then miss the next." I implored, I can do even better than that. Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) finally said: "then the best manner is the fast of Dawood (Radhiallahu anhu) i.e. fasting every alternative day and complete a single Qur'aanic recitation every seven nights."

Hadhrat Abdullaah Bin Amr (Radhiallahu anhu) narrates the when he grew old he would say: "if only I have accepted the concession granted by Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) because

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46 Bukhari - Kitbaabus. Saum - Baabu Sammud Dahr.

now I am frail and weak."[47]

Shah Waliyallah Muhaddith Dehlawi (Radhiallahu anhu), in his book, Hujjatullahil Baaligha, has discussed in great detail the subject of moderation in Ibaadah. He writes: "The object of obedience and worship in Islaam is to reform the soul and eradicate it's inherent deviate nature. Quantity it is not the object since this is more tedious to the common man."

This is the point of the following Hadith of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) "Be steadfast and constant and do not count your Ibaadah. Carry out actions according to your capability."

To achieve constancy and steadfastness, a regulated amount of actions will suffice. That much will be sufficient by which he create within himself the taste for angelic qualities and dislike for all bestial iniquities. Such a realisation should down upon him whereby all these bestial traits are subservient for the angelic nature. However, should his actions merely increase in quantity then the soul will grow accustomed to it and consider it a routine. In this way it would not reap the desired effect upon the person.

Another one of the most important objectives of Shariah is to close and seal the door of excessiveness and complications in Islaam. This is so that people do not become so set in the concoctions ways that those who offer them consider these to be divinely ordained tenets of faith. Once this occurs then those coming even late on will not only consider them such but will be convinced with real and firm conviction that these are products of divine revelation. As a result, Deen will fall prey to adulteration. This is exactly what the Qur'aan refers to when it declares.

“But monasticism they invented B we ordained it nor for them”[Al-Hadeed B 27]

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[47] Bukhari. Kitaabu Fadaailil Qur=aan - Baab Kam Yigraul Qur=aan.

Another point to note is that in these people's minds it is established (even if they may verbally deny it) that the only method of harnessing Allaah's pleasure is by their over-exertiveness of worship; and that if anyone is deficient in these then it will create an extremely impregnable barrier for his process of self rectification and he will stand accused before Allaah Ta'aala. Such people will be put on trial before Allaah Ta'aala exactly in accordance to those expectations of theirs. Accordingly they will be tried for every act of deficient performance. Now if indeed they were negligent then this expectation of theirs will be to their detriment and disgrace. Even their Ibaadah will now fall from the pedestal of acceptance. This is the message Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) wished to put across in the Hadith: "Deen is simple and whoever chooses to make it difficult will soon be overpowered."

For these reasons Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) emphasized to his Ummah not to let go of moderation in all their actions. They should never cross its borders to fall prey to boredom and fatigue. Otherwise the matters of Deen will become dubious to them and their vehicle of prayers will grind to a halt.[48]

The Consequences of Immoderation

Just as immoderation in meditation or a diet will adversely affect the human body, and heath, so too the same would occur to a person's thoughts, inclinations and actions on both the personal and social spheres should immoderation prevail in theses. For this reason Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) described an imbalance immoderation to the cause for collapse and destruction. According to a narration of Hadhrat Abdullaah bib Ma'sood (Radhiallahu anhu) Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) stated:

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[48] **Error! Main Document Only.**. Hujjatullhhil Baaliyha.Vol. 2 page 21-22 - Rasheediya Library Print - Dehli 1375 A.H.

“Destroyed are those who make matters difficult[49]”

Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) repeated the above thrice. The commentary on the word "Tanattu" (to make matters difficult is:

“Nitpicking and exertive excesses in speech and action.[50]”

The Shariah does not condone such actions since they are destructive by nature. If a person gives serious thought to this Hadith then the various ways in which immoderation harms and destroys will become evident. **The first harm** is the duration of this immoderation is indeed very brief. A person will tire very quickly and grow exhausted since it will become extremely difficult for him to maintain the standard, which he had set. Now his entire balance will be upset. Then he will again set another extreme limit which will also vanish like the first and eventually destroy in it's wake all that moderation set out to achieve. Towards this very point did Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) indicate in the following Hadith: "Neither was the journey completed, not any sign of the conveyance left. The companion deserted and the conveyance became downright exhausted.[51]

Most probably it was concerning immoderation that the adage was coined: “The fire which was stoked so quickly, extinguishes just as quickly.”

The second harm of immoderation is that a person becomes deprived of constancy and steadfastness, which is described in the Hadith as the best trait of Islaam.

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49 Muslim - Kitaabul Ilm Bab Halakah Mutanituoon.

50 Mhd Abi Batr al Madeeni Asfahaani - Majmooul Ghaith Fi Ghareebayil Qur=aan Wal Hadith Vol. 3 page 313 - Makkah Print 1988.

51 Mu=jam Tabrani

"Say I believe in Allaah then remain steadfast.[52]"

What is this Istiqaama (steadfastness)? It's position is as the famous statement of saints reads:

"Steadfastness is superior than a miracle."

Even the actions are little but a person is constant in its performance throughout his life. As Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had mentioned that Allaah loves most those actions upon which a person is steadfast even though it be little. Allaah declares in the Qur'aan:

"Verily those who say: Our Rabb is Allaah, and afterward are steadfast, the angels descend upon them saying: Fear nor grieve but hear glad tidings of the Jannat which you were promised."
[Surah Haa Meem Sajdah - 30]

The third harm of immoderation is that a person ultimately never reaches his desired destination. For this reason Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) had mentioned that one should be moderate and thereby reach one's destination. By opposing this Hadith of Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) how can one even hope to acquire his goals? To understand the concept even better we can illustrate the odd and famous children's take of the tortoise and the hare. They were to race for a specified distance. The hare raced off at a fast pace and (due to fatigue and complacency) dozed off along the way. The tortoise along at it's normal pace eventually overtaking the sleeping hare to reach the finishing point comfortably.

The forth harm of immoderate behaviour is that other people become terrified and distant towards such s person. Such a person instead of exemplifying his concerns and actions and expanding his circle of friends, instead serves to discourage others

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52 Muslim.

and severely restricts his circle of acquaintances even. At times people even develop a tendency to reject the actions of such a person which may be a cause of great harm to him. An example of this was the Imaamat of Hadhrat Mu'aadh bin Jabal (Radhiallahu anhu). A Sahaabi complained thus to Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam): "Oh Allaah's Rasul (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam). I am unable to perform my Salaat (in congregation) due to the excessively lengthy Salaat of (or Imaam) Mu'aadh bin Jabah (Radhiallahu anhu). Upon hearing this Nabi (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) mounted the pulpit and, with great rage emanating from his noble countenance, addressed the people thus: "Oh people, You seem to be causing people to take a dislike for Deen. Be aware that whosoever leads people in Salaat should make the Salaat short for behind him there may be ones who are aged, sick or need to fulfill an urgent necessity.[53]

The fifth harm of immoderation is that one eventually undermines the importance and significance of the particular action wherein one displays immoderate behaviour. Even thou it be an action of great nobility and rank to people. But through his action they begin to reject it and formulate the opinion that it is only reserved for the select few. It is not for the common man. An example is given of certain pious saints who used to perform Salaat the whole night through. They would perform Fajr with the Wudhu made for Isha. They would complete a recitation of the entire Qur'aan every night. People would hear about it and think that their behaviour is nothing short of miraculous; we are not capable of the same. Finally with this premonition they even left out their obligatory duties along with those mandatory devotions and recitations of the Qur'aan.

The story is also renowned regarding the Jewish neighbour of the Saint Bayazid Bastami (Radhiallahu anhu). Once a Muslim questioned him as to why he had not yet found the inspiration to accept Islaam, in spite of living so long next to the great Saint

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53 Bukhari - Kitaabus Salaat

Bayazid (Radhiallahu anhu)? The Jew replied: "Which Islaam should I accept? As for the (deficient) Islaam, which you practice, I have no desire to accept. And fast for the Islaam, which Hadhrat Bayazid (Radhiallahu anhu) practices, I have not strength.[54]

Of course, the most harmful consequence of immoderation is that Allaah and his Rasool (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) detested it. Whichever action is held in contempt by Allaah and his Rasool (Sallallahu Alayhi Wasallam) must definitely lead to eventual destruction.

[54] Tadhkiratul Awliyaa Vol. 1 page 141